

KOREAN DICTION FOR SINGERS

by

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## Diacritic Marks Used

<sup>h</sup> means the consonant sound has aspiration. (p<sup>h</sup>, t<sup>h</sup>, ts<sup>h</sup>, k<sup>h</sup>)

' means the consonant sound becomes tensed from the basic sound. (p', t', s', ts', k'); in this thesis, it is not used for ejectives as in IPA.

<sup>̃</sup> is the palatalized *s*, which is between *s* and *sh* sounds in English.

**r** is flap sound of *r*. It is similar to Spanish flap *r* and the *t*-sound in English word *water*.

<sup>̚</sup> means the articulatory closure is not released.

<sup>̣</sup> means spreading of lips

# INTRODUCTION

For hundreds of years, art songs composed by German, Italian, French, and English composers have dominated the standard repertoire worldwide, receiving the most attention. But as tastes have changed and the desire for new repertoire has grown, more and more singers are experimenting with art songs in nontraditional languages. This gives composers of other nationalities hitherto unforeseen performance opportunities for their music, including the rapidly increasing number of Korean art song composers. Due to the recent rise in popularity of vocal composition competitions in Korea, there is new interest in and rapid proliferation of classical vocal music in the Korean language. While there are already numerous instructional texts regarding diction for the traditional art song languages of Italian, German, and French, very few resources exist for Asian languages, especially Korean. The influx of new Korean art songs has fostered a need for diction instruction to promote and improve accessibility of this music for non-native Korean speakers. This thesis hopes to address that need by providing a coherent and thorough instruction manual of Korean diction for native English-speaking, classically-trained singers.

This paper is divided into three sections. The first section explains the basic pronunciation of Korean characters. Korean is written in syllable blocks consisting of a consonant, a vowel, and sometimes a syllable final consonant. Therefore, this first section is divided into three chapters as well explaining how to phonate: 1) syllable initial consonants, 2) vowels, and 3) syllable final consonants in the Korean language. In each of these chapters, the sounds and the phonation methods of individual sound segments in Korean are explained through IPA and in comparison, with pronunciations of Western languages. The second section introduces more advanced sound changing rules that dictate the pronunciation of sounds in sequence. The third, and last section briefly explains Korean intonation briefly. Following the three explanation sections of this manual, there is an appendix with numerous Korean art song examples, (with IPA) illustrating how these rules apply in reality, as well as a list of related YouTube video links



**Table 0.1 Horizontal Stroke based Letter**

Word	Consonant	Vowel
$\text{감}$ (C+V+C) [kam]	$\neg$ (C) [k]	$\vdash$ (V) [a]
Consonant <i>(Batchim)</i>	$\square$ (C) [m]	

**Table 0.2 Vertical Stroke based Letter**

	Word $\text{곰}$ (C+V+C) [kom]
Consonant	$\neg$ (C) [k]
Vowel	$\perp$ (V) [o]
Consonant <i>(Batchim)</i>	$\square$ (C) [m]

## Chapter 1: SYLLABLE INITIAL CONSONANTS

There are two ways of representing sounds, phonetic representation and phonemic representation. Korean is written phonemically, which means that the actual sound of each consonant and vowel may vary depending on the phonological context. To distinguish the two different ways, / / is used for the phonemic representation and [ ] for phonetic representation, for which IPA symbols are used.

There are nineteen consonant phonemes in Korean.<sup>2</sup> In this chapter, only syllable-initial consonants will be discussed. Syllable-final consonants will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Physically, all consonants are produced by engagements of the parts of the mouth responsible for articulation, like the tongue, lips, teeth, soft and hard palate, and larynx, along with the vocal cords. According to the authors of *An Introduction to Korean Linguistics*, Korean consonants can be classified based on the five places of articulation.<sup>3</sup>

An explanation of how each of the nineteen Korean consonant letters is phonated is in the table below, including five tense consonant letters:

---

<sup>1</sup> “Phoneme is one of the units of sound that distinguish one word from another in a particular language ... A **phoneme** is the smallest ‘distinctive unit sound’ of a language. It distinguishes one word from another in a given language. This means changing a phoneme in a word, produces another word that has a different meaning. In the pair of words (minimal pairs) ‘cat’ and ‘bat’, the distinguishing sounds /k/ and /b/ are both phonemes. The phoneme is an abstract term (a speech sound as it exists in the mind of the speaker) and it is specific to a particular language.” Shalini Verma, *Technical Communication for Engineers* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House PVT LTD, 2015), 665.

<sup>2</sup> Park, *Korean Phonation Education Theory*, 72.

<sup>3</sup> EunHee Lee, Sean Madigan, and Mee-Jeong Park, *An Introduction to Korean Linguistics* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 24.

**Table 1.1 Consonants<sup>4</sup>**

Place of Articulation Manner of Articulation		Bilabial	Dental	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	Lax Consonant	ㅍ /p/	ㅌ /t/		ㄱ /k/	
	Aspirated Consonant	ㅍ <sup>h</sup> /p <sup>h</sup> /	ㅌ <sup>h</sup> /t <sup>h</sup> /		ㄱ <sup>h</sup> /k <sup>h</sup> /	
	Hard Consonant	ㅍ' /p'/ <sup>5</sup>	ㅌ' /t'/		ㄱ' /k'/	
Affricate	Lax Consonant			ㅈ /ts/		
	Aspirated Consonant			ㅈ <sup>h</sup> /ts <sup>h</sup> /		
	Hard Consonant			ㅈ' /ts'/		
Fricative	Lax Consonant		ㅅ /s/			ㅎ /h/
	Hard Consonant		ㅅ' /s'/			
Resonance	Nasal	ㅁ /m/	ㄴ /n/		ㅇ /ŋ/	
	Approximant		ㄹ /ɾ/			

## Bilabial Consonants (ㅍ, ㅍ<sup>h</sup>, ㅍ', and ㅁ)

Bilabial consonants are uttered when air is expelled through closed lips, like the *p* sound in the English word *pop*. There are four bilabial consonant phonemes in Korean: /p/, /p<sup>h</sup>/, /p'/, and /m/, represented by ㅍ, ㅍ<sup>h</sup>, ㅍ', and ㅁ, respectively. The ㅍ, ㅍ<sup>h</sup>, and ㅍ' consonants are made when the air passes through the mouth, while the ㅁ consonant is made when the air flows through the nose.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The form of the table followed Park, *Korean Phonation Education Theory*. 2011. 72.

<sup>5</sup> The apostrophe marked in the IPA indicates that tensification of vocal organs when pronouncing the consonant.

<sup>6</sup> Park, *Korean Phonation Education Theory*, 72-73.

### A. The ㅂ /p/ Consonant

The ㅂ consonant at the syllable initial position can be pronounced in two different ways. The representative sound of the ㅂ consonant is similar to the English *p* sound, but with a little less aspiration and a little shorter Voice Onset Time,<sup>7</sup> which occurs at the beginning of a word, as in Figure 1.1.1. The most similar consonant pronunciation in English to the ㅂ consonant in Korean is the *p* sound after *s* as in the words *speak* or *spark*.

바다 [pa da]	<i>sea</i>
바지 [pa tsi]	<i>pants</i>
밥 [paᵇ <sup>8</sup> ]	<i>rice</i>

**Figure 1.1.1. The ㅂ [p] Consonant words at the beginning of a word**

When the consonant is placed between vowels or after ㅁ[m], ㄴ[n], ㄹ[l], or ㅇ[ŋ] sound, the ㅂ consonant in Korean is realized as a voiced sound, which is closer to the *b* sound in English with less subglottal air pressure.<sup>9</sup> The **Figure 1.2** shows how the same ㅂ consonant is pronounced differently depending on where it occurs.

버블 [pɔ bŭᵇ]	<i>bubble</i>
바보 [pa bo]	<i>fool</i>
고백 [ko bɛkᵇ]	<i>confession</i>
도보 [to bo]	<i>walking</i>
반바지 [pan ba dzi]	<i>short pants</i>

**Figure 1.1.2. The ㅂ [p] Consonant words between two vowels or after a resonant sound**

<sup>7</sup> The Voice Onset Time (VOT) refers to the time between the start of the consonant and the start of vibration in the vocal tract. Lee, Madigan, and Park, *An Introduction to Korean Linguistics*, 22.

<sup>8</sup> “ㅇ” This mark means that there is no releasing of the air passage when the applied consonant is pronounced. It will be explained thoroughly in Chapter 3 Syllable Final Consonant.

<sup>9</sup> Edward Finegan, *Language: Its Structure and use, Fifth Edition* (Boston: Thomson Wadsworth, 2008), 112.



## B. The $\text{ㅍ}$ /p<sup>h</sup>/ Consonant<sup>10</sup>

Compared to  $\text{ㅍ}$  [p], the consonant  $\text{ㅍ}$  is more aspirated and renders a longer Voice Onset Time, like the initial *p* sound in English as in the word *pale*, The vocal cords are opened wide, which causes an aspirated sound, and so it takes a longer period of time to be closed.

파도 [p<sup>h</sup>a do]                      wave

포도 [p<sup>h</sup>o do]                      grape

**Figure 1.2.1. The word-initial  $\text{ㅍ}$  [p<sup>h</sup>] Consonant words**

Unlike the  $\text{ㅍ}$  consonant, the  $\text{ㅍ}$  consonant does not become voiced when it occurs between two vowels or after a resonant.

아파 [a p<sup>h</sup>a]                      hurt

슬픔 [sŭl p<sup>h</sup>ŭm]                      sadness

**Figure 1.2.2 The medial  $\text{ㅍ}$  [p<sup>h</sup>] Consonant words**

## Hard Consonants

Korean has five tensed consonants, represented with the five double consonant letters  $\text{ㅃ}$ ,  $\text{ㅆ}$ ,  $\text{ㅈ}$ ,  $\text{ㅊ}$ , and  $\text{ㅋ}$ . Jaehoon Yeon and Lucian Brown explain that “these are pronounced by putting the mouth into the same position as that for the simple counterpart, holding the mouth tense and tight in that position, and then suddenly releasing the sound with virtually no voice and little aspiration (breath release). The tensed double consonants of Korean have no close parallel in English. They are, however, somewhat similar to the Italian double consonants (pp, tt, cc) and to Japanese tensed consonants.”<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> “*h*” is the superscription *h* in the IPA indicates aspiration.

<sup>11</sup> Jaehoon Yeon and Lucien Brown, *Korean: A Comprehensive Grammar* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 19.

C. The  $\text{ㅍ}$  /p'/ Consonant

The  $\text{ㅍ}$  consonant is one of the five tensed consonants in Korean. It is unaspirated, compared to the  $\text{ㅍ}$  and  $\text{ㅍ}$  consonant, and thus, its Voice Onset Time is zero when  $\text{ㅍ}$  is pronounced. The sound is similar to the Italian *p* as in the Italian word *aspetto*.

$\text{빼기}$ [p'ε gi]	<i>subtraction</i>
$\text{빵}$ [p'aŋ]	<i>bread</i>

Figure 1.3.1. The  $\text{ㅍ}$  [p'] Consonant words\_1

Unlike the  $\text{ㅍ}$  consonant, the  $\text{ㅍ}$  consonant does not become voiced between two vowels or after a resonant sound.

$\text{아빠}$ [a p'a]	<i>father</i>
$\text{손뼉}$ [son p'jɔk]	<i>palm</i>

Figure 1.3.2. The  $\text{ㅍ}$  [p'] Consonant words\_2

D. The  $\text{ㅁ}$  /m/ Consonant

The consonant  $\text{ㅁ}$  represents a consonant with a sound similar to the English [m] which is voiced sound, but it is a little devoiced than the English [m]. To some English speakers, the consonant  $\text{ㅁ}$  may sound like the English [b] because of the lack of voicing, but the air still passes through the nasal cavity.

$\text{매미}$ [mε mi]	<i>cicada</i>
$\text{마차}$ [ma ts <sup>h</sup> a]	<i>carriage</i>
$\text{모기}$ [mo gi]	<i>mosquito</i>

Figure 1.4. The  $\text{ㅁ}$  [m] Consonant words

## Dental Consonants (ㄷ, ㅌ, ㄸ, ㅊ, ㅍ, ㅍ, and ㅍ)

Dental consonants are made when the front part of the tongue body interacts with the roof of the mouth while the tip of the tongue positioning behind the teeth. The dental consonants in Korean are /t/, /th/, /t'/, /s/, /s'/, /n/ and /l/, represented with ㄷ, ㅌ, ㄸ, ㅊ, ㅍ, ㅍ, and ㅍ, respectively. While the English /t/ and /d/ sounds are produced with the tip of the tongue contacting the bony area behind the upper front teeth called alveolar ridge, for the Korean *t* sounds, the tip of the tongue is put behind the teeth instead, with the blade of the tongue contacting the front part of the alveolar ridge.

### A. The ㄷ /t/ Consonant

The consonant ㄷ is similar to the English *t* sound, but with less aspiration; it sounds like the English /t/ after an *s* as in *stop*. When the ㄷ consonant is between vowels or after a resonant consonants, it is pronounced as a voiced consonant sound [d] as in the case of the voiced ㅌ consonant pronounced.

다과 [ta gwa]	<i>snack</i>	도자기 [to dza gi]	<i>china</i>
대나무 [tɛ na mu]	<i>bamboo</i>	그대 [kũ dɛ]	<i>you</i>
날다 [nal̃ da]	<i>fly</i>	도둑 [to duk̃]	<i>thief</i>

Figure 1.5. The ㄷ [t] Consonant words

### B. The ㅌ /tʰ/ Consonant

The ㅌ consonant sounds almost identical to the English word initial *t* except for the tongue position as described earlier; that is, the tip of the tongue is put behind the teeth rather than touching the alveolar ridge. The ㅌ consonant is much more aspirated than the ㄷ consonant.

태양 [tʰɛ jang]	<i>sun</i>
토끼 [tʰo k'i]	<i>rabbit</i>

**Figure 1.6. The ㅌ [tʰ] Consonant words**

C. The ㄷ [t'] Consonant

As it is explained about the ㅃ consonant earlier, the ㄷ consonant is very similar to the Italian /t/, as in the Italian word *lettera*. To produce this consonant, the vocal cords are adducted, unlike the ㅌ and ㅌ consonants. They do not vibrate, however, because the vocal cords muscles are tensed. The ㄷ consonant is also unchanged between two vowels or after a resonant.

또 [t'o]	<i>again</i>
딱지 [t'aḳ tʃ'i]	<i>traffic ticket</i>
뚜뚜 [t'u t'u]	<i>toot toot (blowing a trumpet)</i>

**Figure 1.7. The ㄷ [t'] Consonant words**

D. The ㅅ /s/ Consonant

ㅅ represents an *s* sound, but is quite different from the English /s/ in two respects. First, for ㅅ, the tip of the tongue barely touches the back of the bottom teeth instead of the alveolar ridge. Second, the middle of the tongue is also low and flat, unlike the English [s], which needs the tongue grooved to produce a stronger hissing sound.<sup>12</sup> The *s* sound in Korean is much softer than the English [s].

---

<sup>12</sup> Hyo Sang Lee, personal communication.

소 [so]	<i>cow</i>
소나기 [so na gi]	<i>sudden shower</i>
사랑 [sa raŋ]	<i>love</i>
가사 [ka sa]	<i>lyrics</i>
밤새 [pam se]	<i>overnight</i>

**Figure 1.8. The ㅅ [s] Consonant words**

Singers can accomplish a good sound effect from the consonant by pronouncing the consonant in a “caressing” way. For example, the word 사랑 [sa raŋ] meaning ‘love,’ which appears often in Korean art songs, can sound more special, by elongating the time of the consonant pronunciation.

#### E. The ㅆ /s’/ Consonant

While the Korean *s* sound represented by ㅅ is much softer than the English *s*, it is the sound of ㅆ that is much closer to the English *s* sound. In fact, Yeon and Brown explain on the pronunciation of ㅆ as below:<sup>13</sup>

As for Korean ㅆ, the best parallel is a succession of English words finishing and starting on *S*, such as ‘mass suicide’, with a strong volume increase on the second *S*. The difference is that the tongue touches the back of the lower teeth when the ㅆ is pronounced.

---

<sup>13</sup> Yeon and Brown, *Korean: a Comprehensive Grammar*, 19.

싸움 [s'a um̃]	<i>fight</i>
씨앗 [s̃ <sup>14</sup> i at]	<i>seed</i>

**Figure 1.9. The ㅅ [s'] Consonant words**

#### F. The ㄴ [n] Consonant

The ㄴ consonant is similar to the English [n]. Instead of the tip of the tongue touching the alveolar ridge, however, the ㄴ consonant is produced by using the tongue tip against the back of the lower teeth with the tongue body touching the alveolar ridge.

나 [na]	<i>Me</i>
나비 [na bi]	<i>Butterfly</i>

**Figure 1.10. The ㄴ [n] Consonant words**

When the consonant is sung, extra time is needed to better deliver the sound of the consonant to the audience. This means that you stay longer on the consonant by touching the back of the lower teeth with the tip of the tongue before moving on to vowels. This is not different from the way of pronouncing the English *n* effectively.

#### G. The ㄹ Consonant

When it occurs at the beginning of a word or between two vowels, the ㄹ consonant is pronounced as “flapped” ㄹ [ɾ] as in Spanish,<sup>15</sup> which is similar to the unstressed *t* sound as in the second syllable of a word *water*. It is pronounced as [l], on the other hand, either at the end of a word or before another consonant.

---

<sup>14</sup> S̃ is indicating the ㅅ consonant sound with more aspiration which can sound close to the English *sh* sound.

<sup>15</sup> Nathan Hesselink, *Samulnori: Contemporary Korean Drumming and the Rebirth of Itinerant Performance Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), xiii.

라면 [ra mjoŋ]	<i>ramen</i>	그리움 [kũ ri um]	<i>longing</i>
나라 [na ra]	<i>country</i>	바람 [pa raŋ]	<i>wind</i>
날 [nal]	<i>day</i>	달무리 [tal mu ri]	<i>ring</i>
달밤 [tal p'am]	<i>moonlit night around the moon</i>		

**Figure 1.11. The ㄹ [r] Consonant words**

While English [l] is a dark [l], the [l] sound in Korean is a bright [l] as the tip of the tongue quickly moves to touch the alveolar ridge.

## Palatal Consonants (ㄺ, ㄻ, and ㄼ)

Palatal consonants are created when the tongue rests against the hard palate. While English has only two palatal consonant sounds, [dʒ] and [tʃ], there are 3 palatal consonants in Korean represented with ㄺ, ㄻ, and ㄼ. The palatal consonants in Korean are produced more forward in the mouth than those in English; that is, they are more like alveo-palatal, rather than palatal.

### A. The ㄺ /ts/ Consonant

The consonant ㄺ is an affricate sound. Affricate consonants are pronounced when the air is stopped and then quickly released through a narrowed space. Unlike the English palatal consonants, which require lip protrusion, the lips are flat when the Korean /ts/ sound is pronounced. As explained in the stop sounds, the ㄺ consonant becomes a voiced sound, [dz], when it is between two vowels or after resonant consonants.

진달래 [tsiŋ daŋ lɛ]	azalea	진한 [tsi naŋ]	dark or thick
가지 [ka dʒi]	eggplant	간장 [kaŋ dʒaŋ]	soy sauce
강조 [kaŋ dʒo]	emphasis	날자 [naŋ dʒa]	let's fly
남자 [naŋ dʒa]	guy		

Figure 1.12. The ㅈ [ts] Consonant words

B. The ㅊ /tsʰ/ Consonant

The ㅊ consonant is similar to *ch* sound in the English word *chance* without lip protrusion.

허천 [hɔ tsʰɔŋ]	broad sky
추위 [tsʰu wi]	coldness
남촌 [naŋ tsʰoŋ]	village in the south side

Figure 1.13. The ㅊ [tsʰ] Consonant words

C. The ㅉ [tsʰ] consonant

The ㅉ consonant in Korean is the palatal affricate consonant that involves the tensification of the tongue muscles and vocal cords. Its pronunciation is similar to the Italian [tsʰ], as in the Italian word *piazza*. When ㅉ is pronounced, vocal cords are tightly closed so that air cannot pass through the cords easily and the vocal cords do not vibrate at all.

짜여 [tsʰa jɔ]	woven
쪼다 [tsʰo da]	peck
찢어진 [tsʰi dʒo dʒiŋ]	torn
공짜 [koŋ tsʰa]	free

Figure 1.14. The ㅉ [tsʰ] Consonant words



## Velar Consonants (ㄱ, ㅋ, ㆁ, and ㅇ)

Velum is the scientific name for the soft palate. Velar consonants are pronounced when the back body of the tongue touches or approaches the soft palate.

### A. The ㄱ /k/ Consonant

The ㄱ consonant is pronounced when the back body of the tongue touches the soft palate, completely obstructing the airway. It is a *k*-sound, but with much less aspiration than the English *k*. Like the ㅃ, ㅈ, and ㅊ consonants, the ㄱ consonant also becomes voiced when it is placed between vowels or after a resonant consonant, sounding like [g] in the Italian word *margherita*. To obtain a quality sound when the syllable is sung with the consonant, an effort to minimize the amount of the aspiration is needed.

기다리마	[ki da ri ma]	<i>I will wait for you</i>	그대	[kũ dɛ]	<i>you</i>
고기	[ko gi]	<i>meat</i>	간곡히	[kaŋ go kʰi]	<i>sincerely</i>
감격	[kaŋ gyɔk]	<i>being moved</i>	공감	[koŋ gaŋ]	<i>sympathy</i>
굴곡	[kuŋ gok]	<i>curve</i>			

Figure 1.15. The ㄱ /k/ Consonant words

### B. The ㅋ /kʰ/ Consonant

The sound of the ㅋ consonant is similar to [k] in the word *cake*, which requires the most amount of aspiration among all velar consonants.

코스모스	[kʰo sũ mo sũ] <sup>16</sup>	<i>cosmos</i>
카메라	[kʰa me ra]	<i>camera</i>

Figure 1.16. The ㅋ [kʰ] Consonant words

<sup>16</sup> The symbol “ũ” is not an IPA symbol, but adopted from the McCune-Reischauer transcription system, representing [u] or [i] in the IPA symbols. It is pronounced similar to [u] as in the word *good* with lips spread horizontally.

### C. The ㄱ [k'] Consonant

The consonant ㄱ is similar to the Italian [k] in the Italian word *casa*. The vocal cords are tightly closed so the air cannot pass through them and they do not vibrate.

꽃	[k'ot]	<i>flower</i>
끊	[k'euŋ k <sup>hi</sup> nũŋ]	<i>broken</i>
깜빡	[k'am p'ak]	<i>forgot</i>
꿈	[k'um]	<i>dream</i>

**Figure 1.17. The ㄱ [k'] Consonant words**

### D. The ㅇ [ŋ] Consonant

When the ㅇ letter is placed in the syllable initial position, it does not represent any consonant, but is just a filler for the syllable-initial consonant due to the Korean orthographic rule. The letter represents a velar nasal consonant when it is in the syllable-final position. The pronunciation of the consonant will be explained thoroughly in Chapter 3. Figure 1. 18. shows the example words of the ㅇ letter as a syllable-final consonant

장천	[tsaŋ tshoŋ]	<i>the boundless sky</i>
생	[seŋ]	<i>life</i>
영혼	[yoŋ hoŋ]	<i>spirit</i>

**Figure 1.18. The ㅇ [ŋ] Consonant words**

## The Glottal Consonant (ㅎ)

Glottal consonants are pronounced by leaving the vocal cords opened so that the air passes freely through any part of the mouth without any restrictions and with no vibration of the vocal cords. There is only one glottal consonant in Korean, which is represented with ㅎ. It sounds like an English *h* as in the word *hat*.

함 [ham̃]	<i>box</i>
하루 [ha ru]	<i>a day</i>
흘린 [heul̃ liñ]	<i>dropped</i>
헤매다 [he mɛ da]	<i>wonder</i>

**Figure 1.19. The ㅎ [h] Consonant words**

In singing, it should be noted that the consonant needs to be articulated a little before the beat so that the vowel can be sung on the beat.

## **Performance Practice of Syllable Initial Consonants**

The most crucial point in pronouncing consonants in Korean is to distinguish the sounds between Lax, Aspirated and Tense consonants. The key to make proper distinction among these consonants is the amount of aspiration related to voice onset time. For lax consonants such as ㅁ, ㄴ, ㄷ, and ㄹ, precaution is needed not to produce too much aspiration. For nasal consonants such as ㅁ and ㄴ, extra effort should be made to produce more nasal resonance, because otherwise the ㅁ consonant easily gets confused with ㅂ, and ㄴ with ㄷ when it is sung. As in singing in other languages, over-spacing can obscure the sound of the consonants. Projecting sound quality in singing is very advantageous to deliver the text well.

## Chapter 2: VOWELS

There are eight monophthongs<sup>1</sup> (simple vowels) and thirteen diphthongs in Korean.

The monophthongs are represented with: ㅏ, ㅗ, ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅕ, ㅗ, ㅛ, ㅜ, ㅣ

The diphthongs are represented with: ㅗㅓ, ㅗㅕ, ㅑㅓ, ㅑㅕ, ㅓㅗ, ㅓㅕ, ㅕㅗ, ㅕㅓ, ㅛㅗ, ㅛㅓ, ㅜㅗ, ㅜㅓ, ㅡㅣ.

### Monophthongs (Pure Vowels<sup>2</sup>)

A table of IPA for the Korean monophthongs is below:

**Table 2.1 Korean pure vowels IPA**

ㅏ	[a] father
ㅗ	[ɛ] hair
ㅑ	[ɔ] bought
ㅓ	[e] bait
ㅕ	[o] core (Italina)
ㅗ	[u] moot
ㅛ	[ũ] <sup>3</sup> petition
ㅜ	[i] seed

The vowels ㅏ [a], ㅓ [e], ㅣ [i], ㅕ [o], and ㅗ [u] in Korean are essentially pronounced as their counterparts in Italian or Spanish.<sup>4</sup> When pronouncing a Korean simple vowel, the

<sup>1</sup> A Monophthong (or simple vowel) is a vowel consisting of one articulation from beginning to end. Jiyoung Shin, Jien Kiaer, and Jaeun Cha, *The Sounds of Korean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 95.

<sup>2</sup> In Korean language, monophthongs are also called “simple vowels” and diphthongs “complex vowels.”

<sup>3</sup> ~ indicates lip-spreading; [ũ] corresponds to [u] or [i] in the IPA.

<sup>4</sup> Hesselink, *Contemporary Korean Drumming and the Rebirth of Itinerant Performance Culture*,

tongue ceases to move after phonation of the vowel. The largest difference between English and Korean vowels is that a single Korean vowel is always a pure vowel.

**Table 2.2** diagrams the placement of Korean pure vowels in regard to the mouth and the tongue. The triangular shape of the diagram depicts the tongue position mapping the height and the placement of the tongue in the mouth corresponding to each pure vowel. To aid English speakers, each section includes typical English vowels, IPA, and the Korean vowels that are produced in each position.

**Table 2.2 Korean/English Vowel diagram of Korean Vowel ㅣ, ㅑ, ㅓ, ㅡ, ㅕ, ㅗ, ㅛ<sup>5</sup>**

	Front	Center	Back
High	i beat ㅣ	—	u
Middle-High	ɪ bit		boot ㅓ ʊ good
	e bait ㅑ	ㅕ : ə about	ou boat
Middle	ɛ bet ㅓ	ɜ	ㅛ ㅜ
	æ bat ㅓ		ㅜ bought
Middle-Low		ʌ but	
Low		ㅏ a	ㅓ ɑ father

#### A. The ㅏ [a] Vowel

The ㅏ vowel is similar to the English *a* in the word *father* but articulated more forward in the mouth. Comparing the sound of the vowel between the Italian *a* and the ㅏ vowel in Korean, the ㅏ vowel in Korean is darker than the one in Italian, which needs a brighter

<sup>5</sup> Sigyun Park, *Australian English pronunciation Acquisition by Korean and Japanese Learners of English* (Brisbane: The University Queensland, 1997), 13-19.

quality of sound. Therefore, it is easy to lose good resonance while singing the ㅏ vowel in Korean, particularly when the vowel is placed on high notes.

차 [tʰa]	tea or car
사랑 [sa raŋ]	love

**Figure 2.1. The ㅏ [a] Vowel words**

#### B. The ㅓ [ɛ] Vowel

The ㅓ vowel is similar to the English [ɛ], like in the word *hair*,<sup>6</sup> but the position of the tongue is slightly different. For the English [ɛ], the front of the tongue is a bit higher than for the Korean vowel, which requires the jaw to open a little bit more. Choo and O’Grady state in their book, *The Sounds of Korean: A Pronunciation Guide*, as “...if you put a finger or two on your chin, you should feel it drop slightly for ㅓ ... The end result should be a sound somewhere between the ‘e’ of *bet* and the ‘a’ of *bat*.” Originally, the tongue positions of the ㅓ vowel and the ㅕ vowel were different, but now the two vowels are merging to the extent that it is hard to distinguish the sounds of the two vowels.<sup>7</sup>

새 [sɛ]	bird
해 [hɛ]	sun

**Figure 2.2. The ㅓ [ɛ] Vowel words**

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<sup>6</sup> Loren E. Pedersen, *A Simple Approach to French Pronunciation* (Minneapolis: Two Harbors Press, 2016), 120.

<sup>7</sup> The contrast between ㅕ and ㅓ has all but disappeared in contemporary Korean, and most speakers pronounce the two sounds alike, more or less as ㅕ ... Even when a distinction is made in initial syllables between ㅕ and ㅓ, it is very subtle-so subtle that even native speakers of Korean have trouble perceiving it when there is no context. Indeed, the pronunciation of one common word has changed because of the difficulty of the ㅕ / ㅓ contrast. In colloquial Korean, the word ㄴㄹ ‘your’ is pronounced [ㄴ], so as to better distinguish it from ㄴㄹ ‘my’. Choo and O’Grady, 12.

### C. The ㅣ [ɔ] Vowel

The ㅣ vowel is pronounced similarly to IPA [ɔ] as in the English word *bought*, but with the tongue position higher than the English [ɔ] sound and lower than the [o] sound.

너 [nɔ]	<i>you</i>
아버지 [a bɔ dzi]	<i>polite way of calling father</i>

**Figure 2.3. The ㅣ [ɔ] Vowel words**

While articulating vowels vertically is desired in singing in general, it takes an extra effort to articulate the ㅣ vowel vertically. It can be easily confused with the — vowel, which is articulated horizontally.

### D. The ㅐ [e] Vowel

The vowel ㅐ is pronounced similar to the English [e], like the initial vowel sound of the word *bait*,<sup>8</sup> with a higher tongue position than the ㅓ vowel. As mentioned above, the ㅐ vowel is merging with the ㅓ vowel in many native Korean speakers, and so the tongue position can be a little bit lower.

While singing, caution is called for having enough space between molars to avoid not sounding like the [i] vowel. The jaw needs to be dropped just the right amount so that the vowel can be pronounced properly. The right amount of space between the front teeth while singing this vowel is two thirds of the thickness of the forefinger. When it is in a high tessitura, it is advantageous to pronounce the vowel in a more opened and vertical way, closer to the ㅓ vowel.

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<sup>8</sup> The vowels in words such as *hay*, *bait*, and *they* are transcribed with a sequence of two symbols, [eɪ], indicating that for most speakers of English, these words contain a diphthong. The first element in this diphthong is similar to sounds in Spanish or Italian that use the letter *e*. Peter Ladefoged and Keith Johnson, *A Course in Phonetics* (Stamford: Cengage Learning, 2015), 43.



게 [ke]	<i>crab</i>
네게 [ne ge] <sup>9</sup>	<i>to you</i>
베다 [pe da]	<i>cut</i>

**Figure 2.4. The ㅐ [e] Vowel words**

E. The ㅓ [o] Vowel

Unlike the English “o,” which is diphthongized as [ou], the Korean vowel ㅓ is a simple vowel pronounced like the Italian [o] as in the Italian word *core*. When pronouncing the ㅓ vowel in singing, keep in mind not to close the lips too much, which can block the air flow.

노래 [no rɛ]	<i>song</i>
곡 [kɔk̚]	<i>(a piece of) music</i>
모조리 [mo dzo ri]	<i>all</i>

**Figure 2.5 The ㅓ [o] Vowel words**

F. The ㅜ [u] Vowel

The ㅜ vowel is similar to [u] in the English word *moot*.<sup>10</sup> The lips can be spread a little for this vowel in Korean when it is articulated in singing, unlike the sound of the Italian [u], which needs collected lips. The fact that the sound of the vowel is more spread than the one in Latin [u] makes it easier not to lose the vertical space in mouth when it is sung. Singers need to try not to collapse the proper amount of space in mouth.

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<sup>9</sup> Due to the merging of the ㅐ and ㅓ vowels, the syllable ‘네’ in the word 네가(you + the subject particle) is often pronounced to [ni] in pop music, i.e., 네가 [ni ga], in order to avoid confusion with 내가 [nɛ ga] (I+ the subject particle).

<sup>10</sup> Chris McCully, *The Sound Structure of English* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 132.

우리 [u ri]	<i>we</i>
푸르른 [p <sup>h</sup> u rŭ rŭn̄]	<i>blue</i>
고운 [ko un̄]	<i>pretty</i>

**Figure 2.6 The ㅜ [u] Vowel words**

#### G. The — [ǔ] Vowel

The common American English vowel sound [ə] is very similar to the sound of — vowel and is found in the pronunciations of words like *petition*, [pə 'tɪʃ ən], except that the — vowel in Korean is pronounced with a higher tongue position. Lips should also be more spread in the horizontal way while pronouncing [u]. Many non-native Korean speakers can be confused between the vowel ㅜ[u] and the vowel —[ǔ] sounds. Choo and O’Grady explain the difference between two vowels.

It may help to remember that ㅜ is produced with the tongue further back in the mouth and that it has strong lip rounding. In contrast, — is produced with the tongue more forward and without lip rounding.<sup>11</sup>

Because of the spread lips, it can sound shallow during singing. It is advised to drop the jaw a little, especially when the vowel sits in high tessitura. Collecting the lips a little forward can be helpful as well to project the sound with better resonant placement.

그대 [kǔ dɛ]	<i>you</i>
푸르른 [p <sup>h</sup> u rŭ rŭn̄]	<i>blue</i>
그리움 [kǔ ri um̄]	<i>longing</i>

**Figure 2.7 The — [ǔ] Vowel words**

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<sup>11</sup> Choo and O’Grady, 10.

#### H. The ㅣ [i] Vowel

Choo and O’Grady explain that the sound of ㅣ vowel is similar to the English [i], like in the word, *seed* and add the fact that the tongue is slightly higher when the ㅣ vowel is pronounced than when the English [i] is pronounced.<sup>12</sup> Even though it is a closed [i] sound, it is more advantageous to pronounce the vowel in a vertical way in order to create sounds evenly between the syllables.

실 [sil̥]	<i>thread</i>
기다리마 [ki da ri ma]	<i>I will wait for you</i>
-님 [nim̥]	<i>respectful ending for a title</i>

Figure 2.8. The ㅣ [i] Vowel words

### Diphthongs

Diphthongs are combinations of a vowel and a glide such as in the English words, *cow*, *bait*, and *bite*. Depending on the placement of the main vowel vis-à-vis w-/j- glides, there are two types of glides; ‘on-glide’ and ‘off-glide.’ On-glide is the type that [w-] or [j-] is placed before the phonation of the main vowel. When the glide is placed after the main vowel, it is called ‘off-glide.’<sup>13</sup> In Korean, all diphthongs are the “on-glide” diphthongs with the exception of –ㅣ.

#### A. The w-Diphthongs

The w-diphthongs are formed with the initial [w] followed by a main vowel. Table 2.2.1 presents the diphthongs belonging to the [w] class.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>13</sup> Shin, Kiaer, and Cha, *The Sounds of Korean*, 95.

**Table 2.3 The [w] Diphthongs<sup>14</sup>**

ㅘ	[wa] As in “swan”
ㅙ	[wɔ] As in “wonderful”
ㅚ	[wɛ] As in “swag”
ㅜ	[we] As in “wet”
ㅟ	[we, ø] As in German <i>schön</i> ‘beautiful’
ㅠ	[wi, y] As in “weekend”

\*In the past, ㅘ and ㅙ were pronounced as pure vowels (monophthongs) like in the French words *veux* and *tu*; however, nowadays these vowels are phonated as diphthongs.<sup>15</sup> There are cases when ㅙ diphthongs are pronounced as a monophthongs; when an alveolar consonant such as ㅈ[ts], ㅊ[tʃ], or ㅅ[s] is the initial consonant of the syllable, then ㅙ diphthong is pronounced to [y], like French word *tu* ‘you.’<sup>16</sup>

Three of the *w*-diphthongs, ㅚ, ㅜ, and ㅟ, sound very similar to each other, so much that even native Korean speakers normally do not make a distinction among them, but pronounce all three as [wɛ].<sup>17</sup> Originally, the three *w*-diphthongs were differentiated by the degree of how

<sup>14</sup> Park, *Korean Phonation Education Theory*, 117.

<sup>15</sup> Sun, Bates, and Jin, 13.

<sup>16</sup> Lee, personal communication.

<sup>17</sup> Park, *Korean Phonation Education Theory*, 118.

much the jaw is opened when they are pronounced. The mouth is mostly closed when the  $\text{ㅓ}[\text{o}]$  diphthong is pronounced and the mouth is the most wide-opened when pronouncing the  $\text{ㅗ}[\text{w}\epsilon]$  diphthong. The  $\text{ㅜ}$  vowel is placed in between the  $\text{ㅓ}$  and  $\text{ㅗ}$  vowels.

### B. The *j*-Diphthong

There are seven *j*-glide diphthongs: six onglide diphthongs and one offglide diphthong. A six onglide *j*-diphthongs are  $\text{ㅓ}[\text{j}\text{a}]$ ,  $\text{ㅕ}[\text{j}\epsilon]$ ,  $\text{ㅛ}[\text{j}\text{o}]$ ,  $\text{ㅜ}[\text{j}\text{e}]$ ,  $\text{ㅠ}[\text{j}\text{o}]$ , and  $\text{ㅠ}[\text{j}\text{u}]$ . The *j*-diphthongs can be articulated by simply putting  $[\text{j}]$  in front of the vowels  $\text{ㅓ}[\text{a}]$ ,  $\text{ㅕ}[\epsilon]$ ,  $\text{ㅛ}[\text{o}]$ ,  $\text{ㅜ}[\text{e}]$ ,  $\text{ㅗ}[\text{o}]$ , and  $\text{ㅠ}[\text{u}]$ , respectively. The  $\text{ㅡ}[\text{y}\text{j}]$  diphthong is the only offglide diphthong in Korean.

**Table 2.4 The *j*-Diphthongs**

$\text{ㅓ}$	$[\text{j}\text{a}]$ As in “yard”
$\text{ㅕ}$	$[\text{j}\epsilon]$ As in “Yes”
$\text{ㅛ}$	$[\text{j}\text{o}]$ As in “yummy”
$\text{ㅜ}$	$[\text{j}\text{e}]$ As in “Jesu” in Latin
$\text{ㅠ}$	$[\text{j}\text{o}]$ As in “yogurt”
$\text{ㅠ}$	$[\text{j}\text{u}]$ As in “use”

Even among native Korean speakers, it is difficult to distinguish between  $\text{ㅕ}[\epsilon]$  and  $\text{ㅜ}[\text{e}]$  because the differences between them are very subtle. Hence, understanding the difference

between the  $\text{ㅟ}$  [jɛ] and  $\text{ㅢ}$  [je] vowels is even more challenging. The only differences between these two diphthongs is the how much the jaw is opened—the  $\text{ㅟ}$  diphthong has more opening of the jaw than the  $\text{ㅢ}$  diphthong has less.

The  $\text{ㅡ}$  diphthong is pronounced with the initial [ũ] vowel followed by the  $j$ -glide. But there are additional pronunciation rules for this diphthong. If there is no consonant with the  $\text{ㅡ}$  diphthong, that is, if it is written as  $\text{으}$ , the diphthong is pronounced as [ũi]. With any other consonant pairing, the  $\text{ㅡ}$  diphthong is pronounced as the monophthong [i]. One exception to this rule is made when the  $\text{으}$  is used as a postposition, which means the English preposition “Of.” In this case,  $\text{으}$  is pronounced to [e].

의자	[ũi dza]	chair	회의	[hø ũi]	meeting
희망	[hi maŋ]	hope	환희	[hwa ni]	rejoice
씌워	[s̃i wo]	covering	내맘의	[nɛ ma me]	of my heart

**Figure 2.9 The  $\text{ㅡ}$  [ũi] Vowel words**

## Performance Practice of Vowels

Since the sound qualities of the Korean vowels can be similar to each other and some of them are even merging, it is beneficial to make a clear distinction between vowels. It is recommended to articulate vowels vertically in general. Extra caution is needed for the  $\text{ㅟ}$  [ɔ], because it could sound like the  $\text{ㅡ}$  vowel [ũ] if it is not articulated vertically enough. Meanwhile, more protrusion of the lips is desired to articulate the  $\text{ㅡ}$  vowel [ũ] because it helps to project the vowel resonance better, as is the case in general.

## Chapter 3: SYLLABLE FINAL CONSONANTS (*BATCHIM*, 받침)

As explained in the introduction of this paper, Korean is written in linear alphabets arranged into syllable blocks. Examples of syllable blocks without a *Batchim* (syllable-final consonant) are below:

**Table 3.1. Syllable box without a *Batchim***

C	V	가 [ka]	ㄱ	ㅏ
		→		

C	고 [ko]	ㄱ
V	→	ㅏ

With a *Batchim*, the syllable blocks will look like this:

**Table 3.2. Syllable box with a *Batchim*<sup>1</sup>**

C	공	ㄱ
V	[koŋ]	ㅏ
C	→	○

C	V	책	ㅌ	ㅏ
C		[tsʰɛk̚]	ㄱ	
		→		

### Pronunciation of the Single Final Consonant

At the end of a word or before a consonant, all the Korean consonants are pronounced without releasing the closure of the airflow. A Korean language education team, *TalkToMeInKorean*, provides a good explanation: If you place your hand in front of your mouth with a little distance and say “cat.” there will be a puff of air that hits your hand when you pronounce the “t.” Now, say “cat” again, but without letting the tongue closure release when you say the “t.” This is the general sensation when pronouncing the syllable-final t sound in Korean.<sup>2</sup> This will be notated with “ㄱ” in the IPA, which means that there is no releasing of articulatory

<sup>1</sup> Sun, Bates, and Jin, 15.

<sup>2</sup> TalkToMeInKorean, *Hangeul Master* (Kong & Park Inc, 2014), 48.

closure. This chapter will provide detailed explanations of how the fourteen Korean consonants are pronounced when used as a *Batchim*, that is, in the syllable-final position.

A. *Batchim* ㄱ /k/, ㅋ /k<sup>h</sup>/ and ㆁ /kʰ/

When ㄱ /k/, ㅋ /k<sup>h</sup>/, and ㆁ /kʰ/ are in the syllable-final position, they are all pronounced as [k̚], similar to the pronunciation of “c” in the English word *doctor*.<sup>3</sup> Note that all three velar consonants are pronounced the same. It is called “Neutralization” and that is caused by the non-release of the articulatory closure. Differently from singing in English or in German, in which final consonants should be pronounced actively, the final consonants in Korean should not be pronounced with any shadow vowel. This is particularly relevant because Korean consonants do not release their articulatory closure.

목 [mɔk̚]	<i>neck</i>
학 [hak̚]	<i>crane</i>
밖 [pak̚]	<i>outside</i>
부엌 [pu ɔk̚]	<i>kitchen</i>
목자 [mɔk̚ tsʰa]	<i>shepherd</i>

**Figure 3.1. Batchim ㄱ /k/ and ㅋ /k<sup>h</sup>/ words**

B. *Batchim* ㄴ /n/

When ㄴ [n] is in the *Batchim* position, it is pronounced similarly to the *n* sound in English, as in the word *fun*. As with any other consonant, the oral closure should not be released, and thus pronounced with no shadow vowel as in English.

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<sup>3</sup> Sukhee Park, *Korean Pronunciation Education* (Seoul: Yeokrak, 2013), 70.



눈 [nuṅ]	<i>snow</i>
산 [saṅ]	<i>mountain</i>

**Figure 3.2. Batchim ㄴ /n/ words**

C. *Batchim* ㄷ /t/, ㅅ /s/, ㅈ /ts/, ㅊ /tsʰ/, ㅌ /tʰ/, and ㅎ /h/

The six of the Batchims, ㄷ, ㅅ, ㅈ, ㅊ, ㅌ, and ㅎ, are all pronounced as [t̚]. All of the words 낫 /nas/, 낫 /natsʰ/, 낫 /nats/, 낫- /nat/, 낫- [natʰ], 낫- /nah/ will sound the same even though they have different consonants at the end; they all are pronounced as [nat̚].

More examples are given below.

닫다 [taṭ t'a]	<i>close</i>	꽃 [k'ot̚]	<i>flower</i>
벗 [bot̚]	<i>friend</i>	같다 [kaṭ t'a]	<i>same</i>
곶감 [koṭ k'aṁ]	<i>dried persimmon</i>		

**Figure 3.3. ㄷ /t/, ㅅ /s/, ㅈ /ts/, ㅊ /tsʰ/, ㅌ /tʰ/, and ㅎ /h/ words**

These *Batchims* should be pronounced at the very end of the syllable just before the next syllable. This enhances prolonging the phonetic value of the vowel placed in front of the *Batchims* as much as possible. The sensation of the articulation of these *Batchims* is similar to a musical lifting or more or less a momentary pause in singing when it is placed between syllables.

D. *Batchim* ㄹ

The sound of ㄹ in *Batchim* position (at the end of a word or before another consonant) is similar to the English *l*. The difference is that the ㄹ consonant in Korean is made when the tip of the tongue touches the hard palate behind the teeth. Also, the tongue moves faster than when making the English *l* without releasing the air. This difference results from “coloring.” This is a linguistic term that can explain the different sound quality of *l*. Susan Ehrlich and Peter Avery explain this concept thoroughly in their book.

Say the word ‘leaf’ very slowly prolonging the /l/ sound: ‘l-l-l-leaf’. Now say the word ‘feel’, again prolonging the /l/: ‘feel-l-l-l’. During the pronunciation of the /l/ in ‘leaf’, the tip of your tongue should be touching the alveolar ridge. In some dialects of English, the /l/ sounds in these two words are pronounced rather differently, ... The /l/ in ‘leaf’ is referred to as a light /l/ and the /l/ in ‘feel’ as a dark /l/... The /l/ sounds in ‘leaf’, ‘late’, and ‘plate’ are examples of a light /l/, and those in ‘pull’, ‘pal’, and ‘milk’ are examples of a dark /l/.<sup>4</sup>

The ㄹ final consonant in Korean is similar to the light [l] sound .

날 [nal̥]	<i>date</i>
달 [tal̥]	<i>moon</i>
물 [mul̥]	<i>water</i>

**Figure 3.4. Batchim ㄹ [l] words**

E. *Batchim* ㅇ/m/

The consonant ㅇ in *Batchim* position is similar to [m] as in the English word “mom.” As in the case of ㄴ [n], the oral closure should not be released.

숨 [sum̥]	<i>breath</i>
담 [tam̥]	<i>wall</i>

**Figure 3.5. Batchim ㅇ [m] words**

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<sup>4</sup> Peter Avery and Susan L. Ehrlich, *Teaching American English Pronunciation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

F. *Batchim* ㅂ [p], ㅃ [pʰ], ㅍ [pʰ]

The final consonants ㅂ, ㅃ, and ㅍ are all pronounced as [p̚] like the p sound in the English word *capsule*. As in the case of the syllable-final ㅁ, ㅂ, and ㅅ, the articulatory closure is not released, and all are neutralized into the unreleased p.

밥 [pap̚]	<i>rice or meal</i>
뽑다 [pʰop̚ t'a]	<i>pull something out</i>
높다 [nop̚ t'a]	<i>high</i>

**Figure 3.6. Batchim ㅂ [p], and ㅃ [pʰ] words**

G. *Batchim* ㅇ

The consonant ‘ㅇ’ in *Batchim* position is pronounced like the English [ŋ], as in the word *sing*. Compared to French nasal sound, for which there is no oral articulatory closure preventing the air from escaping through the mouth, the tongue body blocks the soft palate completely so the air escapes only through the nasal cavity pronouncing the Korean nasal sound. Three steps are needed to make this sound: 1) open the nasal cavity by lowering the velum, 2) sustain blocking the space between the tongue body and the soft palate, and 3) push air into the nasal cavity. Unlike the English *ng* sound [ŋ] which is prolonged, the Korean [ŋ] sound takes a shorter time of articulation without any shadow vowel.

강 [kaŋ]	<i>river</i>
종 [tsoŋ]	<i>bell</i>

**Figure 3.7. Batchim ㅇ [ŋ] words**

To sing in legato, the *Batchim* should be pronounced at the very end of the vowel and just before the next syllable with a quicker movement of the velum in the upward direction compared to the sound of [ŋ] pronounced in English

## Double Final Consonant

Occasionally, there are double final consonants in the syllable-Final position; that is, there are two consonants as *Batchim*. It is also called “consonant cluster.”<sup>5</sup> An example of a syllable block with two syllable-final consonants is in the table given below.

**Table 3.3 A Syllable block with double final consonant**

C	V	→	ㄴ	ㅍ
C	C		ㄹ	ㅂ

몹 [nɔb̥]

There are eleven compound consonants in Korean that can exist as *Batchim*: ㄱ /ks/, ㄴ /nts/, ㄴㅎ /nh/, ㄷ /lk/, ㄹ /lm/, ㅁ /lp/, ㅂ /l<sup>h</sup>/, ㅅ /ls/, ㅈ /lp<sup>h</sup>/, ㅊ /lh/, and ㅊㅅ /ps/.<sup>6</sup> The double consonants are subject to four pronunciation rules: Silencing, re-syllabification, Tensification, and aspiration.

### A. Silencing

In standard Korean pronunciation, only one of two consonants of each pair is actually pronounced at the end of a word or before another consonant except ㄴㅎ /nh/ and ㅊ /lh/, which will be discussed later.

**Table 3.4 Double final consonant with silencing rule<sup>7</sup>**

Double Final Consonant	Pronunciation	Example
ㄱ /ks/	[k]	몹 /moks/ → 몹 [mok̚] <i>portion</i>

<sup>5</sup> Park, *Korean Pronunciation Education Theory*, 72.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Park, *Korean Phonology Education Theory*, 219.

ㄴㅈ /nts/	[n]	앉다 /ants ta/ → 안따 [aṅ t'a] <i>sit</i>
ㅂㅅ /ps/	[p]	값싼 /kaps s'an/ → 갑싼 [kaṗ s'an] <i>inexpensive</i>
ㄴㅂ /lb/	[l]	넓다 /nɔlp ta/ → 널따 [nɔḷ t'a] <i>it is spacious</i>
ㄴㅌ /ltʰ/	[l]	핥다 /haltʰ ta/ → 할따 [haḷ t'a] <i>lick</i>
ㄴㅅ /ls/	[l]	외곶 /ø gols/ → 외골 [ø golḷ] <i>a single mind</i>
ㄴㅍ /lpʰ/	[p]	읊다 /ülpʰ ta/ → 읊따 [ülṗ t'a] <i>recite</i>
ㄴㅋ /lk/	[k]	읽다 /ilk ta/ → 익따 [ikṯ t'a] <i>read</i>
ㄴㅁ /lm/	[m]	삶다 /salm ta/ → 삼따 [saṁ t'a] <i>boil</i>

The silencing principle is generally applied to the second consonant of the clusters.<sup>8</sup> However, it is the first consonant that is silenced for the ㄴㅂ /lp/ and ㄴㅋ /lk/ clusters, although some speakers may silence the second consonant for the ㄴㅂ /lp/ and ㄴㅋ /lk/ cluster as well; hence, 읊다 /ülpʰ ta/ may be read as 읊따 [ül t'a], and 읽다 /ilk ta/ as 일따 [il t'a].

There are some exceptions for this rule. The double final consonant ㅂㅅ in the words “넓죽하다” and “넓둥글다” is pronounced as ㅂ[pṯ].<sup>9</sup>

넓죽하다 /nɔlp tsuk ha ta/ → 넵쭈카다 [nɔṗ ts'u kʰa da] *it is flat and long*

넓둥글다 /nɔlp tuŋ küḷ da/ → 넵똥글다 [nɔṗ t'uŋ gũḷ da] *it is flat and round*

**Figure 3.8.1. The ㄴㅂ Double Final Consonants words<sup>10</sup>**

<sup>8</sup> Lee Uk Sang, *Middle School Korean Grammar Textbook Resource*, (Seoul: Donga Publication Company, 2017), 35.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Park, *Korean Pronunciation Education Theory*, 74.

Another exception is the case when the double final consonant ㄹㄹ is followed by the ㄱ consonant; it is pronounced as ㄹ[ɭ].

맑게 /malk ke/ → 말게 [maɭ k'e] *clearly*  
 밝고 /palk ko/ → 발꼬 [paɭ k'o] *bright and...*

**Figure 3.8.2. The ㄹㄹ Double Final Consonants words**

#### B. Re-syllabification

In single-syllable block words, the consonant clusters are simplified as described in the preceding section. When it is followed by a vowel, the first final consonant remains in the syllable, but the second final consonant becomes the initial consonant of the next syllable.<sup>11</sup> The process of re-syllabification is shown in the following examples:

**Table 3.5.1 Re-syllabification\_1**

Double final consonants	Re-syllabification
ㄱ [k]	넋을/ nɔks ŭɭ/ → 넋쓸[nɔk s'ŭɭ] <i>soul</i>
ㄴ [n]	앉아/aɳts a/ → 안자[aɳ dza] <i>sitting</i>
ㄴㅅ [ls]	울ㅅ이/ ol s i/ → 을씨 [ol s'i] <i>revenge</i>

The re-syllabification phenomenon can be shown more graphically as follows:

**Table 3.5.2 Re-syllabification\_2**

ㄴ	ㅅ	ㅇ
		—
ㄱ	ㄹ	ㄹ

넋/nɔks/ + 을/ŭɭ/ → 넋[nɔk] 쓸[s'ŭɭ]

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 100.

It should be noted that when the second consonant of the cluster is ㅅ /s/, it is pronounced as tensed s, that is, [s']. This phonological process will be discussed later in Chapter 4.

### C. Tensification

Tensification refers to a general phonological process in Korean through which a consonant becomes a tense consonant after another consonant in the preceding syllable. With regard to double consonants, the tensification occurs on the initial consonant of the syllable that follows the double consonants.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 3.6. Tensification**

Double Final Consonants	Tensification
ㄷㄱ [k̚]	막다 /malk ta/ → 막따 [mak̚ t'a] <sup>13</sup> <i>it is transparent</i>
ㄴㄹ [l̚]	넙다 /nɔlp ta/ → 넙따 [nɔl̚ t'a] <i>it is spacious</i>
ㄹㅁ [m̚]	삶고 /salm ko/ → 삼꼬 [sam̚ k'o] <i>boil and...</i>
ㄹㅍ [p̚]	읊다 /ŭlp̚ ta/ → 읊따 [ŭp̚ t'a] <i>recite</i>
ㄹㅌ [l̚]	핥고 /halt̚ ko/ → 핥꼬 [hal̚ k'o] <i>lick and...</i>
ㅂㅅ [p̚]	없지 /ɔps tsi/ → 업찌 [ɔp̚ ts'i] <i>there is nothing</i>
ㅈㅅ [ɲ̚]	앓다 /andz ta/ → 안따 [an̚ t'a] <i>sit</i>

### D. Aspiration

When ㄴㅎ or ㄹㅎ is followed by a vowel, the ㅎ consonant becomes silent. This rule eases the pronunciation of the double final consonant, as it removes the aspiration that would

<sup>12</sup> Park, *Korean Phonology Education Theory*, 215.

<sup>13</sup> Some speakers pronounce either consonant of the double consonants, ㄷㄱ, ㄴㄹ, ㄹㅁ, ㄹㅍ in their daily dialogue selectively.

arise from the normal pronunciation of the ㅎ sound. When these two double final consonants are followed by an obstruent, however, it cannot be said the ㅎ sound is silenced, because the ㅎ sound is combined with the following obstruent to produce an aspirated obstruent.<sup>14</sup> This is part of a general phonological process in Korean that when ㅎ /h/ meets an obstruent either before or after it, the combination yields an aspirated obstruent with the exception for ㅅ /s/, which does not have an aspirated counterpart. This phonological process will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

**Table 3.7. Aspiration**

Double final consonants	Aspirated consonant Transformation	
ㄴㅎ [n̥]	않기 /aṅh ki/ → 안키 [aṅ kʰi]	<i>not doing...</i>
	않다 /aṅh ta/ → 안타 [aṅ tʰa]	<i>not</i>
	않지 /aṅh tsi/ → 안치 [aṅ tsʰi]	<i>not...</i>
ㄹㅎ [l̥]	닿고 /daṅh ko/ → 달코 [daṅ kʰo]	<i>worn and...</i>
	닿다 /daṅh ta/ → 달타 [daṅ tʰa]	<i>it is worn out</i>
	닿지 /daṅh tsi/ → 달치 [daṅ tsʰi]	<i>“worn” in a colloquial style</i>

## Performance Practice of Final Consonants

Like in other languages, the vowels should be elongated as much as possible in singing in Korean. It means that the final consonants of each of the syllables should be pronounced at the very end of the note. Different from other languages, Korean final consonants should not include a shadow vowel at the end of a phrase. As it is explained at the beginning of this chapter, pronunciation of the syllables is done without releasing the air passage.

<sup>14</sup> Park, *Korean Pronunciation Education Theory*, 147.



## Chapter 4: PHONOLOGICAL PHENOMENA

Pronunciation of a consonant may vary due to the surrounding sounds for the ease of pronunciation. There are a number of sound changing rules for such phonological process in Korean.

### Nasal Assimilation of Obstruent Consonants

In a sequence of syllables, the final consonant of the first syllable becomes the corresponding nasal sound when it is followed by  $\square$  /m/ or  $\sqsubset$  /n/. When the bilabial  $\mathfrak{M}$ /p/,  $\mathfrak{M}$ /p<sup>h</sup>/, or  $\mathfrak{M}$ /p'/ consonant of the first syllable is followed by a nasal sound, they change to the bilabial [m] consonant. When the dental consonant  $\sqsubset$ /t/,  $\sqsubset$ /t<sup>h</sup>/, or  $\sqsubset$ /t'/ is followed by a nasal consonant, it changes into the dental nasal [ɳ] consonant. The velar consonants  $\sqsupset$ /k/,  $\sqsupset$ /k<sup>h</sup>/, and  $\sqsupset$ /k'/ become the velar nasal [ŋ] with the same condition as above.<sup>1</sup>

$\mathfrak{M}$ /p/ → $\square$ [m]	잡는 /tsap nŭn/ → 잡는 [tsa <sup>̃</sup> m nŭ <sup>̃</sup> ]	<i>holding</i>
	법만 /pɔp man/ → 법만 [pɔ <sup>̃</sup> m ma <sup>̃</sup> ]	<i>only law</i>
$\sqsubset$ /t/ → $\sqsubset$ [ɳ]	닫는 /tat nŭn/ → 닫는 [ta <sup>̃</sup> ɳ nŭ <sup>̃</sup> ]	<i>closing</i>
$\sqsupset$ /k/ → $\circ$ [ŋ]	녹는 /nok nŭn/ → 녹는 [no <sup>̃</sup> ŋ nŭ <sup>̃</sup> ]	<i>melting</i>
	곡만 /kok man/ → 곡만 [ko <sup>̃</sup> ŋ ma <sup>̃</sup> ]	<i>only music</i>

Figure 4.1. Nasal Assimilation

<sup>1</sup> Park, *Korean Phonology Education Theory*, 211.

#### A. Place Assimilation of ㄴ[n]

The ㄴ /n/ final consonant changes to the velar nasal ㅇ [ŋ] consonant when it is followed by a velar consonant, and to the bilabial ㅁ [m] consonant when the following consonant is a bilabial consonant.<sup>2</sup>

ㄴ [n] → ㅇ [ŋ]	한강 → 항강 [haŋ gaŋ]	<i>Han river</i>
ㄴ [n] → ㅁ [m]	긴 밤 → 김 밤 [kim paŋ]	<i>long night</i>

**Figure 4.2 Place Assimilation of ㄴ[n]**

#### B. Nasalization of ㄹ[l]

The pronunciation of the syllable-initial ㄹ/l/ changes to ㄴ[n] when it is preceded by a consonant ㄱ[k], ㄴ[n], ㅁ[m], ㅂ[p], or ㅇ[ŋ].<sup>3</sup>

ㄱ [k] + ㄹ [l]	국력 → 궁녁 [kuŋ nʝɔk]	<i>country power</i>
ㄴ [n] + ㄹ [l]	헨리 → 헨니 [heŋ ni]	<i>Henry</i>
ㅁ [m] + ㄹ [l]	함락 → 함낙 [haŋ nak]	<i>surrender</i>
ㅂ [p] + ㄹ [l]	십리 → 심니 [sim ni]	<i>five kilometer</i>
ㅇ [ŋ] + ㄹ [l]	동리 → 동니 [toŋ ni]	<i>village</i>

**Figure 4.3 Nasalization of ㄹ[l]**

Note that the ㄹ/l/-turned-into-ㄴ[n] in turn affects the preceding obstruent, making it a nasal.

<sup>2</sup> Park, *Korean Phonology Education Theory*, 214.

<sup>3</sup> Park, *Korean Pronunciation Education*, 137-138.

C. Assimilation of ㄴ [n] to ㄹ [l or r]

When ㄴ [n] and ㄹ [l] are next to each other in a syllable block sequence, they interact with each other according to the principles of regular approximation and retrogressive approximation.<sup>4</sup>

**Progressive Assimilation:** The ㄴ /n/ consonant becomes the ㄹ [l] consonant when it is preceded by the ㄹ /l/ consonant.

Syllable + Syllable	달님 /tal nim/ → 달림 [tal̥ lim̥] <i>moon</i>
Word + Word	겨울 노래 /kyo ul no re/ → 겨울 로래 [kyo ul̥ lo re] <i>a song of winter</i>

Figure 4.4 Progressive Assimilation of ㄴ [n]

**Retrogressive Assimilation:** When the ㄴ /n/ consonant is followed by the ㄹ /l/ consonant, the ㄴ consonant is pronounced as [l].

논리 /non li/ → 놀리 [no̞l̥ li] *logic*  
 한랑 /han ljaŋ/ → 할랑 [ha̞l̥ ljaŋ] *playboy*

Figure 4.5. Retrogressive Assimilation of ㄴ [n]

## Palatalization of the ㅅ consonant

The ㅅ [s] consonant is palatalized before the ㅣ [i] vowel or a *j*-class diphthong. This is notated as [s̺]. The authors of *The Sounds of Korean* guide this sound as below.

... it is important to realize that neither ㅅ nor ㅆ is identical to the English word *she*.

(ㅅ and ㅆ) are pronounced more toward the front of the mouth than the English

<sup>4</sup> Shin, Kiaer, and Cha, *The Sounds of Korean*, 86.

‘sh’, with the blade of the tongue on the front part of the dental ridge.<sup>5</sup>

오시네	/o si ne/ → [o ʃi ne]	<i>coming</i>
시장	/si tsan/ → [ʃi dzaŋ]	<i>market</i>

**Figure 4.6. Palatalization of the ㅅ [ʃ] consonant**

## Palatalization of Re-Syllabified *Batchim*

When the consonants ㄷ̃, ㄸ̃, and ㅌ̃ are in the *Batchim* position and precede a syllable block beginning with the ㅣ [i] vowel or a *j*-class diphthong, these consonants are re-syllabified into the second syllable block, according to the rule of re-syllabification. Then, the pronunciation of ㄷ̃, ㄸ̃, and ㅌ̃ changes into their corresponding palatal consonants ㅈ/ts/, ㅉ/ts’/, ㅊ/ts<sup>h</sup>/, respectively.<sup>6</sup>

만이	/mat + i/ → 마지 [ma dʒi]	<i>the first child</i>
같이	/kat + i/ → 가치 [ka tʃi]	<i>together</i>

**Figure 4.7.1. Palatalization of Re-Syllabified *Batchim*\_1**

The palatalization occurs only to the re-syllabified ㄷ, ㄸ, or ㅌ, but not to those within the same syllable:

마디	/ma ti/ → [ma di]	<i>a joint, a musical measure</i>
소 띠	/so t’i/ → [so t’i]	<i>the year of the cow</i>
파티	/a tʰi/ → [pa tʰi]	<i>party</i>

**Figure 4.7.2. Palatalization of Re-Syllabified *Batchim*\_2**

<sup>5</sup> Choo and O’Grady, *The Sounds of Korean*, 47.

<sup>6</sup> Park, *Korean Phonology Education*, 214.

## Tense Consonant Transformation

A syllable-final obstruent affects the pronunciation of the initial non-tense consonant of the following syllable,  $\text{ㅁ}/\bar{p}/$ ,  $\text{ㄷ}/\bar{t}/$ ,  $\text{ㄱ}/\bar{k}/$ ,  $\text{ㅈ}/\bar{ts}/$ , and  $\text{ㅅ}/\bar{s}/$  transforming it into a tensed one; that is,  $\text{ㅁ}[p']$ ,  $\text{ㄷ}[t']$ ,  $\text{ㄱ}[k']$ ,  $\text{ㅈ}[ts']$ , and  $\text{ㅅ}[s']$ , respectively.<sup>7</sup>

잡부 /tsap pu/	→	잡뿌 [tsap̥ p'u]	<i>laborer</i>
닫고 /tat ko/	→	닫꼬 [tat̥ k'o]	<i>close and...</i>
집다 /tsip ta/	→	집따 [tsip̥ t'a]	<i>pick up</i>
죽적 /tsok tsok/	→	죽쩍 [tsok̥ ts'ok̥]	<i>legacy</i>
목수 /mok su/	→	목쑤 [mok̥ s'u]	<i>carpenter</i>

**Figure 4.8.1. Tense Consonant Transformation\_1**

If the syllable-final  $\text{ㅎ}$  sound is followed by the  $\text{ㅅ}$  sound of the following syllable,  $\text{ㅅ}$  is pronounced as its tensed counterpart  $\text{ㅅ}[s']$ ; the  $\text{ㅎ}$  sound may be optionally realized as  $[\bar{t}]$ .

$$\text{ㅎ}/h/ + \text{ㅅ}/s/ \rightarrow [(\bar{t})\text{ㅅ}[s']]$$

중소 /tsoh so/	→	조쏘 [tso(\bar{t}) s'o]	<i>I agree</i>
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**Figure 4.8.2. Tense Consonant Transformation\_2**

## Elimination

### A. $\bar{\text{ㅎ}}$ [h] Weakening

The consonant  $\text{ㅎ}$  /h/ is the weakest consonant, and therefore is very much subject to elimination. The syllable-final  $\text{ㅎ}/h/$  becomes silent when it is followed by a vowel; including the cases where the  $\text{ㅎ}$  /h/ sound is the second consonant of the syllable-final consonant cluster  $\text{ㄴㅎ}$  /nh/ or  $\text{ㄹㅎ}$  /lh/.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Park, *Korean Pronunciation Education*, 154-163.

<sup>8</sup> Brown and Yeon, *The Handbook of Korean Linguistics* (Chichester: WILEY Blackwell, 2015), 28.

Vowel + ㅎ + Vowel	좋아 /tso <u>h</u> a/ → 조아 [tso a] <i>good</i>
Nasal sound + ㅎ + Vowel	괜찮아 /kwɛn tsʰan <u>h</u> a/ → 괜차나 [kwɛn̄ tsʰa na] <i>it is okay</i>
Approximant sound + ㅎ + /j/-diphthong	끓여 /k'ül <u>h</u> jɔ/ → 끄려 [k'ül̄ rjɔ] <i>boiling</i>

Figure 4.9.1 ㅎ [h] Weakening\_1

In careful speech, the syllable-initial ㅎ/h/ may be optionally pronounced after a vowel of the previous syllable. In other words, ㅎ/h/ can be eliminated in pronunciation in this case.

Vowel + ㅎ + vowel	사할 /sa <u>h</u> wal/ → 사왓 [sa (h)wal̄] <i>life and(or) death</i>
Nasal sound + ㅎ + vowel	곤하게 /kon <u>h</u> a ke/ → 고티게 [ko n(h)a ge] <i>weary</i>
Approximant sound + ㅎ + vowel	발해 /pal <u>h</u> ɛ/ → 바래 [pa r(h)ɛ] <i>Balhae Kingdom</i>

Figure 4.9.2. ㅎ [h] Weakening\_2

#### B. Simplification of syllable-final consonant clusters

As explained in the previous chapter (Ch. 3, Sec. 2--Double Final Consonants), consonant clusters (ㄱㅅ/ks/, ㄴㅈ/nts/, ㅂㅅ/ps/, ㄹㅂ/lp/, ㄹㅌ/lth/, ㄹㅅ/lɪs/, ㄹㅍ/lph/, ㄹㄱ/lk/, and ㄹㅁ/lm/) are simplified into one of the two consonants in the cluster. See Table 3.4.

## ㄴ [n] Addition

When two words are combined and the second word begins with /i/ vowel or a *j*-class diphthong, the consonant ㄴ [n] is added before the /i/ vowel of the diphthong.<sup>9</sup>

인천역 /in tsʰɔn jɔk/	→	인천 <sup>ㄴ</sup> 역 [in̚ tsʰɔn̚ n̚jɔk̚]	<i>Incheon station</i>
고운 여자 /ko un jɔ dza/	→	고운 <sup>ㄴ</sup> 여자 [ko un̚ n̚jɔ dza]	<i>beautiful woman</i>
밭 일 /patʰ il/	→	반 <sup>ㄴ</sup> 일 [paṇ̚ nil̚]	<i>field work</i>
나뭇잎 /na mut ip/	→	나 <sup>ㄴ</sup> 뭇잎 [na muṇ̚ nip̚]	<i>a leaf</i>

**Figure 4.10 ㄴ [n] Addition**

## Aspiration

As explained with the consonant clusters that contained the ㅎ /h/ sound, a lenis obstruent consonant (ㄱ /k/, ㄷ /t/, ㅂ /p/ or ㅈ /ts/) is combined with the ㅎ /h/ sound to be made an aspirated counterpart. The first type of aspiration occurs when the syllable-final ㅎ consonant is followed by ㄱ, ㄷ, or ㅈ of the following syllable. The pronunciation of the following consonant changes to ㅋ [kʰ], ㅌ [tʰ], and ㅊ [tʰʃ], respectively.<sup>10</sup>

ㅎ [h] + ㄱ [k], ㄷ [t], ㅈ [ts] → ㅋ [kʰ], ㅌ [tʰ], ㅊ [tʰʃ]

놓고 /noh ko/ → 노코 [no kʰo] *releasing*

좋다 /tsoh ta/ → 조타 [tso tʰa] *good*

좋지 /tsoh tsi/ → 조치 [tso tʰʃi] *“good” in a colloquial style*

**Figure 4.11.1. Aspiration\_1**

The second type of the aspiration occurs when ㅎ comes after the syllable-final ㄱ [k], ㄷ [t], ㅂ [p], or ㅈ [ts]; the four consonants become ㅋ [kʰ], ㅌ [tʰ], ㅍ [pʰ], ㅊ [tʰʃ], respectively.

<sup>9</sup> Shin, Kiaer, and Cha, *The Sounds of Korean*, 190-191.

<sup>10</sup> Park, *Korean Pronunciation Education Theory*, 147-150.

$\neg[k], \sqsubset[t], \sqsupset[p], \text{ㅈ}[ts] + \text{ㅎ}[h] \rightarrow \text{ㅋ}[k^h], \text{ㅌ}[t^h], \text{ㅍ}[p^h], \text{ㅊ}[ts^h]$   
 족히 /tsok **hi**/ → 조키 [ts **k**<sup>hi</sup>] *enough*  
 답답하다 /tap **tap** **ha** da/ → 답따파다 [tap̚ **t**<sup>a</sup> **p**<sup>h</sup>a da] *suffocating*

**Figure 4.11.2. Aspiration\_2**



## Chapter 5: INTONATION

There is no fixed intonation rule in Korean. Stresses on syllables vary depending on the contexts and the information that a speaker wants to deliver most saliently. Occasionally, even postpositions can be stressed, though in general, they are not stressed in singing.

**Figure 5.1** is an example of a few phrases from the song “Loom Song” by Wonju Lee showing the stressed syllables in bold face. It shows that important words are stressed. Specifically, which syllable in a word is stressed varies depending on the performer’s interpretation of the music.

Lyric	내 땀의 한 방울도      날 줄에 스며
IPA	nɛ t’a me haŋ baŋ ul do      naŋ ts’u re sũ mjo
Word by word translation	My <b>sweat</b> one <b>drop</b> on the vertical <b>string</b> soaked
Literal translation	Even one <b>drop</b> of my <b>sweat</b> is soaked into <b>the string</b>
Lyric	그대 영혼 감싸기에      따뜻하거라
IPA	kũ de jɔŋ hoŋ kaŋ s’a gi e      t’a t’ũ tʰa go ra
Word by word translation	<b>Your soul</b> to <b>embrace</b> as <b>warm</b> as
Literal translation	It is <b>warm</b> enough to <b>embrace your soul</b>

**Figure 5.1** Accented syllable in phrases

## CONCLUSION

It can be challenging to learn Korean diction for native English speakers since there are sounds which are not identical between English and Korean. One of the challenges for English speakers is recognizing the different sound qualities among the consonants in the same series, such as

/ㅍ([p]), ㅍ ([p <sup>h</sup> ]), ㅍ(p')/	/ㅌ([t]), ㅌ ([t <sup>h</sup> ]), ㅌ([t'])/	/ㅋ([k]), ㅋ ([k <sup>h</sup> ]), ㅋ([k'])/
/ㅈ([ts]), ㅈ ([ts <sup>h</sup> ]), ㅈ ([ts'])/	/ㅅ(s)], or ㅅ([s'])/	

In other languages such as English and Chinese, it is a major factor of differentiating consonant sounds whether consonants are voiced or unvoiced. In Korean, it is the amount of aspiration that differentiates consonants. Some consonants, like the tense ones, do not even exist in English. Another challenge in pronouncing consonants in Korean is sound changing rules, by which the same consonant may be pronounced in different ways depending on its surrounding sound. The biggest difficulty for many English speakers is pronouncing vowels correctly. Since vowel qualities are not identical between English vowels and Korean pure vowels, and the vowel space is not as specific as that for consonants, thorough understanding of the vowel quality is crucial to mastering Korean pronunciation and singing in Korean. A great advantage of pronouncing Korean vowels is that contrary to English vowel letters whose pronunciation can vary depending on the placement within a word, the vowels in Korean are always pronounced in the same way regardless of their placement.

In order to help non-Korean singers, video clips have been created, and the video links are attached to this paper.

## APPENDIX 1: TABLES OF CONSONANTS AND VOWELS

### *Consonants*

Aspirated	Moderate	Non-aspirated
ᄃ [k <sup>h</sup> ]	ᄂ [k] [g]	ᄁ [kʰ]
ᄆ [p <sup>h</sup> ]	ᄅ [p] [b]	ᄄ [pʰ]
ᄉ [t <sup>h</sup> ]	ᄈ [t] [d]	ᄇ [tʰ]
ᄋ [ts <sup>h</sup> ]	ᄊ [ts] [dz]	ᄊ [tsʰ]
	ᄌ [s] [s̃]	ᄌ [sʰ] [s̃ʰ]
ᄏ [h]		
		ᄎ [ŋ]
		ᄍ [n]
		ᄍ [l] [r]
		ᄍ [m]

### *Vowels*

Pure vowel	<i>j</i> -diphthong	<i>w</i> -diphthong
ᄀ [a]	ᄀ [ja]	ᄀ [wa]

ჰ [ɛ]	ჰ [jɛ]	ჰჰ [wɛ]
ჟ [ɔ]	ჟ [jɔ]	ჟჟ [wɔ]
ჲ [e]	ჲ [je]	ჲჲ [we]
ჴ [o]	ჴ [jo]	ჴჴ [ø]
ჶ [u]	ჶ [ju]	ჶჶ [wi]
ჷ [ǔ]	ჷ [ǔi]	
ი [i]		

*Double Final Consonants*

Double Final Consonants	Simplification	Re-syllabification	Hardened consonant transformation	Aspirated consonant transformation
კს/ks/	კ [k]	→ კ + ს → კს	→ კ	
ნს/nts/	ნ [n]	→ ნ + ს → ნს	→ ნ	
ნჲ/nh/	ნ [n]	→ ნ	N/A	→ ნ
კლ/kl/	კ [k] ] or ლ [l]	→ ლ + კ	→ ლ / კ	
მლ/lm/	მ [m]	→ ლ + მ	→ მ	

ᄢᄢ/lp/	ᄢ [l]	→ ᄢ+ᄢ	→ ᄢ/ᄢ	
ᄢᄢ/ls/	ᄢ [l]	→ ᄢ + ᄢ → ᄢᄢ	→ ᄢ	
ᄢᄢ/lp <sup>h</sup> /	ᄢ [p] or ᄢ [l]	→ ᄢ+ᄢᄢ	→ ᄢ/ᄢ	
ᄢᄢ/lh/	ᄢ [l]	→ ᄢ	N/A	→ ᄢ
ᄢᄢ/ps/	ᄢ [p]	→ ᄢ + ᄢ → ᄢᄢ	→ ᄢ	

## APPENDIX 2: YOUTUBE LINKS

**Korean Consonants:** <https://youtu.be/dwn1hxZkBE0>

**Voiced/Unvoiced sound from the same consonant:** <https://youtu.be/POOJYvIrQv8>

**Korean Monophthongs IPA:** <https://youtu.be/hRIwlmUqEz0>

**Korean Diphthongs:** <https://youtu.be/0lX8RgTJviY>

**Palatalization of the ㄹ consonant:** <https://youtu.be/5dR0M2pafuk>

# APPENDIX 3: MUSICAL EXCERPT: LEE, WONJU, LOOM SONG

## 10. 베틀 노래

작곡 이원주  
작사 고정희

$\text{♩} = 96$

Soprano / Tenor

Piano

*mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *p*

*L.H.*

4

*L.H.* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

8

*p* *mp*

내 맘 의 한 방 울 도 날 줄 이 스

ne t'a me han' bai ul do nal ts'u re sū

12

*mf* *p* *mf*

며 그 데 영 혼 감 성 기 에 따

mjo kū de jəŋ hoŋ kam' s'a gi e t'a

15 *p* *mp* *pp* *mp*

뜻 — 아 기 라 — 고 즈 너 기 풀 어 람 은

t'ü t'ha go ra ko dzu na gi pu ro ga mün

20 *mf* *mp*

고 — 품 의 실 구 리 한 — 평 생 오 — 가 는

ko t'hoŋ e sil k'u ri han' pjoŋ seŋ • ga . nūn

24 *mf* *ff* *mp*

만 — 남 의 영 — 아 — 우 리 님 생 각 파 실 실 이 자

man na me iŋ a u ri nim' seŋ gak k'wa sil si ri ts'a

30 *f* *mp* *mf* *mp*

여 새 백 바 람 마 아 줄 실 비 단 이 거 라

se bjak pa ram ma ga dzul sil bi da ni go ra



36

*mf*

기 다 리 마

*mp*

기 다 리 마

*mf*

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

ki da ri ma

ki da ri ma

41

*p* *f* *mf*

기 다 리 마 하루에 드 열 두 번 곁 기 는 심 이 여

*p* *mf* *f*

ki da ri ma ha ru e do jol du baen k'ŏn k'hi nŭn sŏ i yŏ

47. 무작정 풀린 기엔 무서운 밤 이 거 든 단 번 에 끝 내 기 엔 아 쉬 운

mu dzak pul n gi en mu so un pa mi ga dūn tan bo ne k'un ne gi en a swi un

53 *subito p*

pa mi go. dūn

*f*

heo cheon geul bin sa rang ga pyeong saeng

*subito p*

heo cheon geul bin sa rang ga pyeong saeng

58

동안 흠린눈물 오조리 스켜 그대 아픔 풀어주는

doŋ aŋ hŭl rin nuŋ mul mo dzo ri sŭ mjo kŭ de a pŭm to po dŭ nŭn

64 **ff A tempo** *부드럽게*

비단길이거라 비단길이거라 비단길

pi dan gi ri go ra pi dan gi ri go ra pi dan gil

70 **fff accel.**

이 거라

i go ra

**fff**

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